

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01

TRSE-00 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 NSF-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 /146 W

-----122464 010905Z /23

R 010703Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3147

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLU HI

HICOMTERRPACUS

USMISSIN GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 3302

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, PLOS

SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

1. FISHERIES TEAM WAS ABLE TO ARRANGE HOUR-LONG MEETING WITH GEOFFREY DABB, PNG LEGAL ADVISOR TO DFAT DURING STOPOVER IN BRISBANE AIRPORT. DABB CONFIRMED THAT GPNG WAS REVIEWING POSITIONS REGARDING SPRFA AND THAT POLITICAL DECISION WOULD BE REQUIRED IF PNG WERE TO MODIFY STANCE TAKEN AT SUVA MEETING. HE CHARACTERIZED WILSON'S TWO-ORGANIZATION PROPOSAL AS A "TECHNICAL" ONE AND IMPLIED THAT POLICY MAKERS WOULD CONSIDER IT, BUT DECISIONS WOULD BE TAKEN WITH OTHER FACTORS IN MIND AS WELL.

2. DABB STATED HE HAD REFLECTED ON THE SUVA MEETING AND
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COULD SEE NO SOLUTION TO JURISDICTIONAL PROBLEM OTHER THAN TWO-TREATY APPROACH OR A RESERVATION CLAUSE FOR THE US. TEAM PURSUED U.S. PROPOSAL FOR A MUTUAL DISCLAIMER CLAUSE AND INDICATED FLEXIBILITY WITH REGARD TO WORDING SO LONG AS BALANCE WAS ACHIEVED. DABB EXPRESSED INTEREST BUT STATED THAT GPNG WOULD HAVE TO LOOK AT HOW ORGANIZATION WAS TO OPERATE BEFORE TAKING ANY DECISION. HE REITERATED

THEME THAT FINAL DECISIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE RESERVED FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS.

3. THE FIJIAN POSITION WAS OBVIOUSLY OF INTEREST TO DABB, AND HE SPOKE STRONGLY AGAINST THE SPC ASPECT OF THEIR POSITION CHARACTERIZING IT AS "PURE PACIFIC POLITICS". HE IS OF THE VIEW THAT IF FIJI AND OTHER ISLAND GOVERNMENTS BEGIN TO REOPEN CONCEPT OF PT. MORESBY DECLARATION, NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE STALLED FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME. DABB IS OF OPINION THAT FORUM NATIONS WILL MEET SOME TIME IN MAY (PNG WOULD PREFER LATE MAY) IN SUVA TO DISCUSS ISSUES, AND DABB EXPECTED IT TO BE A CONTENTIOUS SESSION. HE STATED THAT PNG WAS GOING TO MOVE FORWARD WITH ITS OWN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT AND THAT THE GPNG DID NOT INTEND TO ALLOW INDECISION ON THE PART OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO HINDER THEIR PLANS.

4. COMMENT: DABB WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED THAT TEAM HAD MADE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO MEET WITH HIM AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT US AND GPNG MIGHT ARRANGE A BILATERAL MEETING PRIOR TO THE JUNE 5-10 SESSION, STATING THAT BY THAT TIME "WE WILL HAVE SOME THINGS TO TALK ABOUT".

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